

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-30

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DRAFTED BY EUR/WE:CKJOHNSON:VE
APPROVED BY EUR: AAHARTMAN
S/S - O: R.ELTZ
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 024322

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, IT
SUBJ: OFFICIAL VISIT OF PRESIDENT LEONE

REF: ROME 931

1. DURING CALL ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN FEBRUARY 4, AMBASSADOR ORTONA SAID THAT WHILE HE WAS ON CONSULTATIONS IN ROME LAST WEEK HE HAD DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF HIS VISIT TO THE U.S. WITH PRESIDENT LEONE. LEONE STRESSED THAT HE WAS EAGER TO COME, BUT UNFORTUNATELY PRESSING DOMESTIC PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THE ISSUE OF THE DIVORCE REFERENDUM, RULED OUT A VISIT BEFORE THE END OF APRIL. ORTONA SAID HE HAD TOLD LEONE THAT IT WAS PROBABLY NOT ADVISABLE TO CONSIDER AN ALTERNATIVE DATE PRIOR TO MID-MAY, IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT PRESIDENT NIXON MIGHT VISIT EUROPE IN APRIL. ORTONA SAID HE THOUGHT THAT ANY DATE BETWEEN MID-MAY AND FALL WOULD BE FEASIBLE FROM PRESIDENT LEONE'S STANDPOINT.

2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN THANKED ORTONA FOR THIS INDICATION OF WHEN PRESIDENT LEONE WOULD BE AVAILABLE, AND SAID WE ALSO HAD REGRETTED THE DIFFICULTIES IN WORKING OUT CONFIDENTIAL

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A MUTUALLY AGREEABLE DATE. IN RESPONSE TO ORTONA'S QUESTION ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP TO EUROPE, HARTMAN REPLIED THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO REPEAT NO DECISION BY THE PRESIDENT

ON HIS TRAVEL PLANS AS YET, BUT THAT FOR PURPOSES OF
CONTINGENCY PLANNING WE ARE BEARING LATE APRIL IN MIND. KISSINGER

CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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